

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 EB-11 COME-00 OMB-01 AEC-11 SS-20 NSC-10 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9343

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NATO

SUBJECT: BELGIAN COMMENTS ON NATO MINISTERIAL, BURDEN  
SHARING AND ATLANTIC RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR DE STAERCKE, BELGIAN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO NATO, GAVE A PRESS BACKGROUNDER AT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON DECEMBER 5 IN ANTICIPATION OF THE UPCOMING MINISTERIAL MEETINGS OF THE DPC AND NAC. DE STAERCKE DEVOTED A GOOD PART OF HIS PRESENTATION TO THE ISSUE OF BURDENSARING AND SUPPORTED THE NEED FOR EUROPEANS TO RELIEVE THE US OF THE "PSYCHOLOGICAL" BURDENS OF ITS DEFENSE EXPENDITURES IN EUROPE. SECONDLY, DE STAERCKE SOPKE OF THE PRESENT STATE OF RELATIONS AMONG ALLIES, PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE AND THE KEY ROLE OF SECRETARY KISSINGER IN THE EVOLUTION OF ATLANTIC RELATIONS. DE STAERCKE ALSO TOUCHED ON SPECIALIZATION AND COMMON ARMS PRODUCTION, RELATING BOTH TO THE NEED TO REPLACE

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EUROPE'S F-104G AIRCRAFT. IN VIEW OF THE VULNERABILITY OF OUR

SOURCE, ADDRESSEES SHOULD REVEAL NEITHER THAT THE EMBASSY OBTAINED THE INFORMATION NOR THAT THE BACKGROUNDER WAS GIVEN BY DE STAERCKE. END SUMMARY.

2. DE STAERCKE SAID THAT IT IS TIME FOR EUROPEANS TO SERIOUSLY EXAMINE THE BOP DEFICIT EXPERIENCED BY THE US AS A RESULT OF ITS DEFENSE EFFORT IN EUROPE. HE SAID THAT THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN AWARE OF THE PROBLEM AND THE NEED FOR A SOLUTION, AND THAT OTHER GOVERNMENTS SHARED THIS AWARENESS. THE REAL PROBLEM FOR THE US, HE MAINTAINED, IS PSYCHOLOGICAL RATHER THAN ECONOMIC: FOR EXAMPLE, THE US PAYMENT OF 36 PCT OF PIPELINE EXPENDITURES AND THE US 30 PCT SHARE OF INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS ARE PSYCHOLOGICALLY TOO HEAVY TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE AMERICANS, AND NEW FORMULAS ARE NEEDED TO ALLEVIATE THIS BURDEN, DE STAERCKE STRESSED THAT THE NEED TO THREAT THE BURDEN-SHARING AND BOP PROBLEMS IS A SERIOUS ISSUE, SINCE NEGLECT COULD INCREASE "BAD TEMPER" ALREADY PERCEPTIBLE WITHIN THE ALLIANCE.

3. DE STAERCKE SAID THAT THE US POSITION ON BURDENSARING BECAME KNOWN FOLLOWING THE ENACTMENT OF THE JACKSON-NUNN AMENDMENT, AND HE DESCRIBED IT AS FOLLOWS. US DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AMOUNT TO \$2.5 BILLION (TIME PERIOD NOT MENTIONED) OF WHICH \$1.3 BILLION WOULD BE OFFSET BY THE FRG, LEAVING A BOP DEFICIT OF \$1.2 BILLION. OF THIS, \$900 MILLION ARISES FROM THE STATIONING OF US TROOPS IN NATO EUROPE EXCLUDING THE FRG, AND THIS \$900 MILLION SHOULD BE "STERILIZED", OR OFFSET, BY PURCHASES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THE US. THE REMAINING \$300 MILLION OF THE DEFICIT STEMS FROM US CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMONLY FUNDED ACTIVITIES, AND THIS AMOUNT MUST BE PICKED UP BY OTHERS. (COMMENT: THE FIGURES QUOTED BY DE STAERCKE WERE REPEATED BY OUR SOURCE, WHO HAD TAKEN CAREFUL NOTES AND WHO IS CONSIDERED RELIABLE. MOREOVER, OUR SOURCE SAID THAT DE STAERCKE CHECKED A PAPER HELD BY AN AIDE AND THEN HIMSELF VERIFIED THE FIGURES HE HAD USED. END COMMENT)

4. THE ATMOSPHERE ON THE EVE OF THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, SAID DE STAERCKE, WAS NOT ESPECIALLY GOOD: THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS HAD DEMONSTRATED THE ALLIES' VULNERABILITY, AND TEMPER WITHIN THE ALLIANCE ARE FRAYED. THE RESULTANT PROBLEMS EXIST AMONG ALLIES, HOWEVER, AND DO NOT AFFECT THE POSTURE OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ALLIANCE VIS-A-VIS THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

5. DE STAERCKE LAUNCHED AN EXPLANATION OF WHY THE DECEMBER 10-11 MEETINGS ARE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT BY NOTING THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD BE ATTENDING FOR THE FIRST TIME. EACH TIME DR. KISSINGER DEALS WITH SOMETHING, HE SAID, THINGS HAPPEN AND CHANGES ARE EFFECTED. DE STAERCKE CREDITED THE SECRETARY WITH AN ACUTE PERCEPTIVENESS WITH RESPECT TO ATLANTIC RELATIONS,

WITNESS THE APRIL 23 SPEECH. ALTHOUGH THE IDEAS PUT FORTH AT THAT TIME WERE NOT AT FIRST WELL RECEIVED, DE STAERCKE RECALLED, IT IS USEFUL TO SEEK A REAFFIRMATION OF THE STRATEGY AND GOALS OF THE ALLIANCE. WHILE A NATO DECLARATION WILL NOT BE READY FOR SIGNATURE ON DECEMBER 10, THE EXPECTED DISCUSSION OF ITS CONTENTS BY NAC WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL. WHEN ASKED WHEN THE NATO DECLARATION WOULD BE READY FOR SIGNATURE, DE STAERCKE REPLIED THAT THREE FACTORS WOULD BE DETERMINING: (A) PROGRESS ON THE DRAFT; (B) THE TIMING OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S TRIP TO EUROPE; AND (C) PLANS THAT EVOLVE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF NATO'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY IN 1974.

6. WHEN LISTING THE TOPICS EXPECTED TO COME UP THROUGHOUT THE MINISTERIAL MEETINGS (EUROGROUP, DPC AND NAC), DE STAERCKE INCLUDED COMMON ARMS PRODUCTION AND THE WEU. WITH RESPECT TO THE FORMER, HE SAID THAT IT IS NECESSARY TO RE-EXAMINE IT EACH YEAR, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE COMMING NEED TO REPLACE THE F-104G AIRCRAFT IN SEVERAL COUNTRIES. THIS LED DE STAERCKE INTO A DISCUSSION OF SPECIALIZATION, IN WHICH HE SAID THE US IS "HIGHLY INTERESTED". HE SAID THAT THE DUTCH INTEREST IN SPECIALIZATION IS NOT IN REDUCING THEIR DEFENSE BUDGET, BUT RATHER IN RIDDING THEMSELVES OF A NUCLEAR ROLE AND REMOVING ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS SYSTEMS FROM DUTCH SOIL. DE STAERCKE DID NOT RETURN TO THE SUBJECT OF THE WEU.

7. COMMENT: EMBASSY POSSESSION OF THIS REPORT WHOULD NOT BE REVEALED, FOR TO DO SO WOULD COMPROMISE OUR SOURCE. SIMILARLY, DE STAERCKE'S NAME SHOULD NOT BE CONNECTED TO THE INFORMATION, PROVIDED TO CERTAIN NEWSMEN AS BACKGROUND FOR THEIR REPORTING OF THE NATO MEETINGS. STRAUZ-HUPE

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